

REMARKS

Claims 7 - 11 are in the application.

As a result of the foregoing amendment, the specification has been provided with appropriate headings. In this connection, it is respectfully pointed out that the changes are indicated in the English translation of the version of the international application as amended during the international phase. This translation is entitled "Translation of Amended Pages of WO 00/64659 (PCT/EP00/03011)".

As a result of the foregoing amendment, the claims have been rewritten as claims 7 - 11. These claims do not include a claim corresponding to original claim 3.

Accordingly, the objection to the drawings and the objection to claim 3 should be withdrawn.

The claims have been written to better conform to US practice.

Claim 7, which replaces original claim 1, has been rewritten to make it clear that the method according to the present

invention specifically serves to modify the shape of hollow boards of thermoplastic material as compared to merely shaping the boards.

Since the originally used word "shaping" includes the meaning of "modifying the shape", it is submitted that no new matter has been added.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-3 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Keller et al and under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hara et al, are respectfully requested.

The present invention as recited in claim 7 is directed to a method for modifying the shape of already existing hollow boards. Before the method according to the present invention is carried out, the hollow boards already have at least one cavity in the board interior which is open toward the board edge. In the course of the method according to the present invention, the cavity which was previously freely accessible from the outside of the board is closed at the lateral board edge while leaving open at least one supply opening for filling medium.

Alternatively, the previously already existing cavity is

initially completely closed before a supply opening for filling medium is introduced into the wall of the already existing cavity.

Subsequently, filling medium is filled into the cavity which had been closed in the manner described above, and the shape of the hollow board is modified by the application of pressure.

On the other hand, the two references relied on by the Examiner in rejecting the claims disclose methods for producing board-like objects, as is clear from column 7, line 19 to column 8 line 23 of Keller et al and claim 1 of Hara et al.

The references do not disclose or suggest methods for modifying the shapes of already existing, i.e., previously produced, hollow boards.

In the prior art, cavities in the interior of the plate-like or board-like objects are produced during the respective method and, therefore, are not already in existence before the methods are carried out. The cavities produced as a result are closed off and, therefore, are not open toward the edges of the board-like objects to be produced, as is clear from column 7, line 64 to column 8 line 9 of Keller et al and column 3, line 57 to column

4, line 1 of Hara et al.

Consequently, the prior art does not show a method in which a hollow space or cavity which already exists and is freely accessible from the outside at the edge of a plate-like or board-like object is closed while leaving open a supply opening for filling medium, or, after the cavity has been completely closed, a supply opening for filling medium is introduced into the wall defining the cavity.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 7 and the claims depending therefrom are patentable over the art of record.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing, it is submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance and such allowance is respectfully solicited.

Any additional fees or charges required at this time in connection with the application may be charged to Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 11-1835.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on May 21, 2004.

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